

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. The listing of claims presents each claim with its respective status shown in parentheses.

1. (*Currently Amended*) A method for treating a the-skin surface of a patient, comprising:

(a) ~~providing~~applying against the skin surface of a patient an instrument body with a longitudinal axis and a distal working end, said distal working end comprising a working surface at the end of the longitudinal axis that carries an abrading structure comprising a plurality of sharp elements for engaging and abrading the skin surface together with a vacuum source coupled to at least one aperture about said working surface, the abrading structure and the at least one aperture positioned within a raised outer periphery that completely circumscribes the abrading structure and the at least one aperture;

(b) translating the working surface over the skin surface to thereby abrade the skin surface ~~without rotating the working surface relative to the longitudinal axis of the instrument body;~~ and

(c) contemporaneously actuating the vacuum source to thereby cause suction engagement of the skin surface against the raised outer periphery and the plurality of sharp elements of the working surface and to aspirate skin debris through the at least one aperture.

2. (*Original*) The method as in claim 1 further comprising the step of providing a fluid to the skin to enhance suction engagement of the skin against the working surface.

3. (*Original*) The method as in claim 2 wherein the fluid is provided from a fluid source to a distal region of the instrument body.

4. (*Original*) The method as in claim 3 wherein the fluid is provided from a fluid source to at least one outflow port in the working surface.

5. (*Original*) The method as in claim 2 wherein the fluid is provided with a pharmacologically-active agent for treating skin.

6. (Original) The method as in claim 2 wherein the fluid is provided with an agent selected from the class consisting of citric acid and lactic acid.

7. (Original) The method as in claim 2 wherein the fluid is provided with an agent selected from the class comprising TCA (trichloroacetic acid), glycolic acid, alphahydroxy acid (AHA).

8. (Original) The method as in claim 2 wherein the fluid is provided with an acid for etching the skin surface.

9. (Original) The method as in claim 2 wherein the fluid is provided with a crystalline abrasive.

10. (Original) The method as in claim 1 wherein step (a) provides a working surface with undulations for increasing the area of the working surface for engaging skin.

11-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A method for treating a skin surface of a patient, comprising:

translating a working surface of a handheld device relative to the skin surface, said working surface comprising an ~~abrading~~ abrasive structure configured to abrade the skin surface, an aperture in the working surface, an outer periphery that encircles the abrasive structure and the aperture, at least a portion of the abrasive structure spaced from the aperture; and

continuously applying a vacuum through ~~[[an]]the~~ aperture formed in the working surface in order to draw the skin against the outer periphery and the abrasive structure and aspirate-aspirate debris away from the working surface while abrading the skin surface.

16. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 15, further comprising the step of providing a fluid to the skin, said providing a fluid occurring while the skin surface is being abraded.

17. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 16, wherein providing a fluid to the skin surface comprises supplying at least one fluid through a fluid opening located at or near the working surface of the handheld device.

18. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 16 wherein the fluid comprises a pharmacologically-active agent.

19. (*Currently Amended*) A method for treating human skin, comprising:

translating a handheld device relative to a skin surface to abrade said skin surface, said handheld device comprising a working surface with an ~~abrading~~-abrasive structure at a distal end of said handheld device and at least one aperture at or near the working surface, said abrasive structure and said at least one aperture being circumscribed by an outer periphery of the working surface, and the at least one aperture being positioned radially closer to the outer periphery than said abrasive structure, said aperture being in fluid communication with a vacuum source to remove debris away from the working surface;

abrading the skin surface by translating the abrading structure over the skin surface ~~without rotating the abrading structure relative to adjacent portions of the handheld device~~; and

continuously aspirating debris through the at least one aperture while the skin surface is being abraded.

20. (*Currently Amended*) The method as in claim 19, further comprising the step of providing a fluid toward the working surface~~end~~.